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**Bud Weaver, Choctaw, Okla.:** Bud's the proud owner of a 2002 **Dodge** 4-door shortbed pickup equipped with a Cummins diesel engine and 6-speed standard transmission. "I used this pickup on a trip out west to tow a 27-ft. Airstream camper that weighed about 6,000 lbs. We wrote down every gallon of fuel that we used and found that we averaged 15.98 mpg. I'm well satisfied with this pickup but not too pleased with the short bed on it.

"My 1997 **Chevrolet** equipped with a 350 cu. in. Vortec engine is my worst buy. It got only 12 mpg on a similar trip and had major engine and drivetrain problems. With only about 30,000 miles on it the pinion gear and seal went out and I had to replace the crankshaft and bearing."

**Roy C. Stillman, Kane, Penn.:** "In 2007 my wife bought a **Compact Compost Tumbler**. It hasn't made anything that resembles good compost yet. It's the worst \$300 I've ever spent."

**Chris Dunham, Green River, Utah:** "My three 1970 **International Harvester** 856 tractors are all best buys. Even though they're very old they do a good job. They hold up better than some of my tractors that are much newer.

"I bought a 1995 **Fiat** F130 tractor and am very disappointed with its overall power. The tractor runs hot, the 3-pt. hitch doesn't work, and the remote valves don't function properly. The electric 4-wheel drive lock won't work properly, either."

**Gary Alford, Edwardsburg, Mich.:** "My 2005 **Deere** HDX 4-WD Gator equipped with a 20 hp gas engine is my worst buy. This machine is cold blooded even when the outside temperature is above 90 degrees. The carburetors have been upgraded a few times but they still don't cold start well. Also, this machine steers hard."

**"This machine is cold-blooded even when the outside temperature is above 90 degrees."**

**Thomas Cheney, Oriskany, N.Y.:** "I've put more than 3,300 hours on my **Ferris** Pro Cut 61-in. mower without touching the engine or transmission."

**Kenn Keyser, Van Wert, Ohio:** Kenn's the satisfied owner of a 2004 **Deere** 9760 combine which he bought used last summer. "We previously owned two smaller Deere combine models - a 7720 Titan II and a 9600. This new machine has more than replaced those two. It has amazing capacity and the ability to eat those green-strawed beans that have become so common. We were able to operate in wheat at 5 mph and in beans at 5 to 6 mph with a 635 Hydraflex. Even with an 8-row header in 180 bu. plus corn, I wasn't able to overload the machine at speeds of more than 6 mph."

On the negative side, he lists his 2004 **Hardi** Navigator sprayer. "The foam system on it never worked properly. Hardi has done almost nothing to fix the problem which should have been fixed under warranty. Also, only Hardi parts will work on Hardi sprayers. Even their hosing is odd-sized so you have to buy all replacement parts from the company. They also have no factory service reps to deal with problems that come up in the field. Instead, they rely totally on their dealers. I won't purchase another product from this company."

**Vernon Boettcher, Elmore, Minn.:** "In 2006, I bought a **Karcher** G2500PH gas power washer from Menards with a Honda engine. About a year ago the pump started to pulse. I tried to get it repaired but got the run-around after many tries. The last person I talked to was someone out of the U.S. I finally took it to the dump."

**John Lang, Monmouth, Oregon:** "This tractor has exceeded all my expectations and is truly a quality machine at an affordable price," reports John about his 1999 **Zetor** 8540 4-WD tractor equipped with a cab. "It's fuel efficient, has plenty of power for its size, has a roomy quiet cab, and excellent hydraulics. I'd definitely buy another one.

"The hand tools I purchased from **Harbor Freight**, including punches, chisels, and hooked pry bars, are my worst buys. They're all made of poor quality steel so they bend or break and get dull very easily. They're no good at all."

**Ron Melchert, Seymour, Wis.:** Ron likes his **Magellan** Maestro 3100 portable GPS auto navigation system. "Before purchasing the Magellan I tried out a different brand but returned it about a week later. The Magellan is a much easier unit to operate and is a lot more user friendly."

**Edgar Von Soosten, Girard, Kansas:** "My 2000 **Dodge** Dakota quad cab pickup has more than 160,000 miles on it with few problems. I change the oil every 3,000 miles and rotate the tires on schedule. That pays off."

**Carl Wray, Valparaiso, Ind.:** "I like my **Texas Blaster** sandblaster which I read about in *FARM SHOW's* Vol. 30, No. 5 (p 877 380-5829; www.texasblaster.com). The sandblaster holds 140 lbs. of blast media and runs on 7 cfm at 80 psi. It'll clean 1 sq. ft. per minute and blast for an hour and a half on a tank of sand. It has a 14-gal. tank and an easy-pour funnel for fast loading. It's fitted with 10-in. dia. hard rubber tires.

"It's a well balanced unit that can adjust the sand output to the point that I can hardly see it. It really does a good job of cleaning," says Wray.

**Edward M. Truty, Knox, Ind.:** Edward's pleased with **R.E.A.M.** Sparkplug adapters (ph 989 743-9148; www.reamproducts.com). "My Allis Chalmers B tractor would foul the plugs every two weeks. I bought these sparkplug adapters to install platinum plugs and I didn't have to change plugs all season."

**John Thies, Perry, Mo.:** "My **New Holland** TC26DA HST tractor rides rough. The cab on my **New Holland** TD95D loader tractor needs more leg room. Also, the front upper portion of the cab restricts my visibility when I use the tractor to stack bales in our barn.

"My **International Harvester** Super H tractor is an all-time best buy. I often drive it in antique tractor parades."

**Darrel Bates, Philadelphia, Miss.:** "My 2002 **Kubota** M9000 tractor handles great and has had no mechanical problems. It's also easy on fuel.

"My 2007 **Dodge** 2500 pickup equipped with a Hemi V-8 engine rides rough and gets only 11 mpg. The dealer had led me to believe it would get 17 to 18 mpg because of the new technology that shuts down four cylinders when not needed, but it never did. I traded this pickup for a **Ford** F-150, which gets a more reasonable 16 mpg.

"My **Ferris** walk-behind mower never performed right and the company wouldn't help in any way. I think **Scag** and **Toro** make the best lawn mowers."

**Victor Rodriguez, Farmington, Ky.:** "My best buys are the wasp parasites I bought from **Kunafin Insectary** to control fly populations (ph 800 832-1113; www.kunafin.com). The

## He Improved His "Cyclone Rake"

Rick Marley, Decatur, Ill., likes his Cyclone Rake leaf mulcher (www.cyclonerake.com) but says the canvas-covered hopper that comes with the unit leaves something to be desired.

"The mulcher does a great job and has saved me many hours of labor. But the hopper consists of a big canvas bag on an aluminum strut frame that mounts on a 2-caster wheeled trailer. The bag is designed to open from the back by pulling on a flap, and then you tip the bag back to dump the leaves out. However, the bag is made in such a way that it's difficult to get all the leaves out - they pack in so tight that they don't want to dump."

To solve the problem, he removed the bag and frame from the trailer and replaced it with a homemade box made from 3/8-in. thick plywood. The box measures roughly 3 ft. square but is slightly narrower at the front end to keep leaves from packing so tight. It's completely smooth on the inside with no obstacles. The box is hinged at the bottom and has a door on back that opens to the side.

"Now when I open the door and pull the box back, all the leaves and grass clippings slip out right away," says Marley.

"My only cost was for two 4 by 8-ft. sheets



**Rick Marley replaced the canvas-covered hopper on his Cyclone Rake leaf mulcher with a plywood dump box.**

of plywood and some hardware, which included three metal hinges and three hasps and pins to keep the door shut. I also installed a square metal screen on top of the box to let air out, and I cut an opening into the front to accommodate the blower chute. The bag came with a plastic collar that hooked up directly to the blower chute. I removed the collar and mounted it inside the box."

Contact: **FARM SHOW** Followup, Rick Marley, 3340 S. Mount Zion Road, Decatur, Ill. 62521 (ph 217 424-0045; rick npep @insightbb.com).

company grows and sells the parasites specifically to control flies. I have two breeder chicken barns where flies were a big problem. A friend told me about **Kunafin** and I found out the product really works. Unlike chemicals, the parasites can be used anywhere flies are a problem."

**Bob Cully, Chanute, Kansas:** "My worst buy was my 2006 **Sears Craftsman** wheeled weed trimmer. I was able to use it only three times before it quit working, even though I had only owned it for 30 days. I took it back for repair work but didn't get it back until five weeks later. Then when I started it up it would only idle. I'd never buy another one."

**Steve Wilkinson, Panama City Beach, Florida:** "My wife always liked the way **Jeeps** handle. We had three of them. However, after 50,000 miles they would just fall apart, engines and all. Finally I convinced her to switch to **Toyota** and we haven't had one problem in more than 150,000 miles on a **Toyota** Land Cruiser and **Toyota** Tacoma pickup. No problems. They're dependable and ride great."

**Tom Johnstin, Marietta, Penn.:** A 2007 **New Holland** L160 skid loader rates as Tom's "best buy". "I had a small Case 1825 skid loader for 11 years that performed well. However, my operation outgrew it and I needed a larger and more comfortable model. The L160 is perfect and is so much more comfortable to use. It's equipped with a hydraulic-operated bucket release which I think is wonderful. It lets me change attachments from the driver's seat just by pushing a button."

**Dale Valley, Brant, Mich.:** "My 1999 **Central Boiler** outdoor furnace is my worst buy. After the third year it started to leak water along welds on the back side of the water jacket. I had a neighbor fix it, but then three weeks later the front side started to leak. I contacted the dealer who wanted it sent back to the factory, so I paid them \$150 to take it back. They tried to say it was my bad water that caused the problem, even though there was no rust inside the water jacket. I had added the chemicals to the water as required.

"They voided my warranty and wanted \$2,500 for a new water jacket, or they would weld up the old one and send it back. That's what I had them do, but when the stove came back it actually leaked worse than before. So

I added four cans of **Aluma Seal** (designed for auto radiators) to the water and that slowed it down to where I only had to add water twice a week. However, it wouldn't stop leaking so I used it one more year and then got rid of it. I figured it cost me \$1,500 per year for four years to heat my house, and I still had to cut my own wood. It was a real headache.

"Five years ago I replaced the unit with an **Aquatherm** and haven't had any problems. With the **Central Boiler** unit, every three weeks I had enough ashes to fill a 55-gal. drum whereas with the **Aquatherm** unit I have maybe a 5-gal. pail per week. The **Aquatherm** unit is much more efficient."

**Clarence C. Olson, Madison, Wis.:** "I used to say, 'You can't farm without a pickup.' Now I say, 'You can't farm without a **Deere** Gator.' I love my 4 by 6 diesel because it goes anywhere and is especially handy for fencing work. It has a low box which also makes it easy to pick up rocks in the field. The diesel models are heavier and have a lot more power than the gas models."

**Dan McKinnon, Airdrie, Alberta:** Dan's the satisfied owner of two 2000 **Honda** 300 ATVs and one 2003 **Honda** 350 4-WD ATV. "These machines require very little maintenance and just never quit. We use them every day in our feedlot and on pasture."

**Colin Rosengren, Midale, Sask.:** "A crop nutrition planning service provided by **Western Ag Labs** doubled my barley yields and resulted in the barley being accepted for malt (Saskatoon, Sask., Canada; ph 306 978-0373; www.westernaglabs.com). The company uses a plant root simulator to measure plant available nutrients. Using this method they were able to measure potassium deficiencies, which is critical to growing good quality malt barley and maintaining the low protein required without sacrificing yields.

"My 2003 **Case IH** MXM140 tractor is my worst buy. I bought this tractor used with 600 hours on it and now it has about 1,300 hours. I've had problems with almost everything on this tractor. The pressure regulator valve blew out almost immediately, the self-leveling front-end loader doesn't work right, the front wheel hubs on one side went out twice, the pto quit working once with an internal snap ring broke, the hydraulic detents don't work right, and the cab is dirty because whenever